

14 Away in a manger

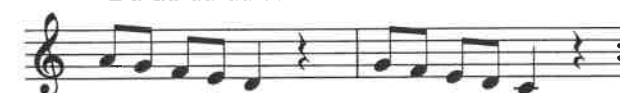
RESOURCES ▶ CD track 15 ▶ Warm ups: Nos. 15a–e, 18a–c, 25, 26

Information

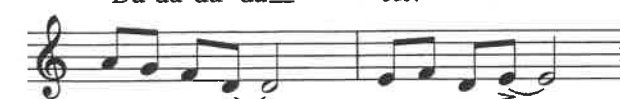
The most well-known melody for these words sung in England was composed in 1895 by the American William J. Kirkpatrick. Another standard American tune can be found in the *New Oxford Book of Carols*, No. 100; and a setting to a traditional tune from Normandy can be found in *Carols for Choirs* 2, No. 2. This setting is the first of two in *Voiceworks at Christmas*, and it comes from a collection called *Carols for Today* written by Herbert Chappell in the early 1970s, which presented a fresh and lively popular-style look at carols and songs suitable for the season. It is attractive and easy to pick up, and lends itself to performing with a range of supporting instruments.

Starting

- After warming up with scales and some articulation exercises that mobilize the mouth and tongue and encourage energy, teach the following, based on a short riff. Repeat until confident with a good groove:



- Move to this next exercise, emphasizing the syncopation (tied note with an accent) and keeping it light and full of energy:



- Sing the first section of the carol with correct rhythm and the proper words.

Teaching and rehearsing

- Sing verses 1 and 3 in unison, enjoying the syncopated and lively rhythm. Add finger clicks or claps to add atmosphere. The leader, or another non-singer, can add some simple percussion (drum or tambourine).
- Try this melody in canon. Divide singers into two equal groups; the second group begins at the * in bar 6. Play around with the grouping until there is general confidence with the canon idea.
- Verse 2 begins in bar 20 and is a complete contrast—it is

smoother, quieter, and harmonically a bit more adventurous (bars 25, 27, and 33). Note that the rhythm of most bars is the same. Teach it by rote; start with 'The cattle are lowing'. The next bit, 'the baby awakes', is the same, but doesn't come down to the low note at the end. With the exception of the upbeat in bar 28, this whole pattern repeats in bars 28 to 32.

- Tackle the middle phrase (bars 24–8) next. Supporting chords from the piano will help ears to hear the harmony. Repeat with bars 32–6, paying attention to the slightly different intervals in bars 35–6 at the turn-around (preparation) before returning to the first section.
- Try running the whole carol through to get the joins between sections smooth, and achieving the contrasts where necessary.

Ideas

- To help achieve contrast in the middle section (verse 2), get singers to stand (and perhaps clap) for verses 1 and 3, but sit down for verse 2.
- Help the crescendo in bars 33–6 by standing up gradually as the sound gets louder!

Listen out

- Make sure the pulse in the middle section (verse 2) doesn't slow down; the longer note values and smoother sound will tend to pull it back without care.
- Mouth movements become less exaggerated when singing quietly, and words can get lost, so focus on articulation of consonants in this section.
- Check the tuning in the phrase 'little Lord' in bar 25 (similarly bar 33); the rising tones and sudden shift in tonality may make these notes uncertain and probably flat.
- Bar 35 has a trap—the A# is a bit unexpected and may be flat. Keep it bright by using the vowel sound in 'momeeng'.
- Check that everyone is holding the last note of each phrase in verses 1 and 3 for the same length; this is particularly important for the canon verse, and the end of the whole song.

Performing

- Aim for a lively and spirited performance, keeping the sound light and full of energetic rhythm.
- Try adding some instrumental forces if available—jazz organ sound instead of piano; guitar; bass; percussion.

29

love thee, Lord Je - sus, look down from the sky, and

C11 C6 C11 C6

p

33 *cresc.* **D.S. al Coda**

stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.

Absus Ab7 C/G Gsus B7 E7

cresc.

CODA

37 *rall.*

- ven, to live with thee there.

B⁹ Esus *rall.* E7 A

dim.

14 Away in a manger

Words Anon.

Herbert Chappell

Voices

Piano

mf

con Ped.

5 *mf* *

1. A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

Am Dm7 G7

8

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus
close by me for e - ver,

Cmaj7 Fmaj7 B⁹

11

lay down his sweet head. — The stars in the bright
and love me, I pray. — Bless all the dear child -

Esus E7 Am

14

— sky looked down where he lay, —
— ren in thy ten - der care, —

Dm7 G7 Cmaj7

17

to Coda ⊕ dim.

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
And fit us for hea -

Fmaj7 B[♭] Fmaj7/E

20

p

2. The cat - tle are low - ing, the

E7 C11 C6

p legato

23

cresc.

ba - by a - wakes, But lit - tle Lord

C11 C6 Absus Ab7

cresc.

26

p

Je - sus no cry - ing he makes, I

C/G Db/G Csus C7